

Encinitas Landscape Wins 2021 WaterSmart Landscape Contest

Congratulations to our 2021 WaterSmart Landscape Contest winners, Ken and Susan Terzes!

The Terzeses transformed their traditional lawn yard into an enclosed patio area to enjoy the morning sun as well as a shady spot in the afternoon. The colorful, winning design features a variety of lush, water-efficient plants surrounding a Cercis or "Forest Pansy Redbud" tree, which will become drought-tolerant once established. The landscape utilizes drip irrigation and wood chips for mulch, further reducing outdoor water use.

The WaterSmart Landscape Contest is held annually by water agencies throughout San Diego County to showcase attractive landscapes that use less water than conventional turf-heavy landscapes. Winning entries exhibit excellence in curb appeal, climate-appropriate plant selection, design, and efficient irrigation.

Photos of the Terzeses' landscape and winners from throughout the county are available at www.landscapecontest.com.



OMWD Keeps "AAA" Bond Rating While Board Makes Budget Cuts to Save Over \$1 Million

In June, Fitch Ratings, a global rating agency that offers independent credit opinions, reaffirmed OMWD's "AAA" bond rating with a stable outlook, the highest possible rating.

OMWD is one of only a small number of Southern California water agencies that have achieved the AAA rating. In reaffirming the AAA rating, Fitch cited prudent rate-setting, low cost burden, adequate capital investment, and an exceptionally strong financial profile. Additionally, despite annual water rate increases attributable primarily to increased wholesale water costs, Fitch reported that OMWD rates remain highly affordable.

Affirmation of the bond rating, particularly in these challenging times, not only recognizes OMWD's strong financial position, but also allows OMWD to obtain lower interest rates when issuing bonds to finance critical new water facilities. Any improvement in the interest rate for repayment of these bonds will result in significant savings. This protects ratepayers from bearing undue financial burden as OMWD moves forward with water supply projects designed to ensure customers enjoy a safe and reliable water supply well into the future.



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Municipal Water District in the
interest of an informed public.

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BOARD MEETING DATES

Please visit our website at
www.olivenhain.com for dates.

MISSION STATEMENT

Olivenhain Municipal Water District is
a multi-functioning public agency that
is dedicated and committed to serving
present and future customers in a
service-oriented manner by:

Water

Providing safe, reliable, high-quality
drinking water while exceeding
all regulatory requirements in a
cost-effective and environmentally
responsive manner.

Recycled Water

Providing recycled water and
wastewater treatment in the most
cost-effective and environmentally
responsive method.

Parks

Safely operating the Elfin Forest
Recreational Reserve and providing all
users with a unique recreational,
educational, and environmental
experience.

Emergency Management

Complying with policies and
procedures that adhere to local, state,
and federal guidelines for national
security and disaster preparedness.

Sustainable Operations

Pursuing alternative and/or renewable
resources with the most sustainable,
efficient, and cost-effective approach.

What to Do When Your Bill Seems High

Water bills typically rise during warm summer months. But do you have an unusually high water bill, even compared to last summer? The following questions may help you determine possible causes.

- *Is your water meter moving when all water is turned off?*

Visit www.olivenhain.com/meter for videos on reading your meter and how to use your water meter to detect leaks on your property.



- *Are there any dripping faucets?*

A faucet leaking 30 drips per minute wastes approximately 15 gallons per day. A shower leaking 10 drips per minute wastes more than 500 gallons per year.



- *Do you have a leaking toilet?*

Here's a simple test: Put a few drops of food coloring in the tank. Wait for 25 minutes. If the color spreads into the toilet bowl, there's a leak.

- *Does the handle on your toilet have to be jigged to make the water stop running?*



- *Do you have a sprinkler system? If so, is it on a timer, and is the timer operating correctly? Is there a leaking irrigation valve?*



- *Were you gone for any number of days during the month in question (holidays, vacations)? If so, did somebody take care of your plants and/or animals for you?*

- *Did you have out-of-town visitors or guests during this billing period?*

- *Are appliances such as your water softener or under-the-sink filter operating correctly?*

- *Do you have a hot tub or pool? If so, have you adjusted the float valve lately? Did you fill your pool or hot tub this billing period?*

- *Did you have your fire sprinkler system serviced?*

- *Are there any wet spots on the lawn or inside the home on walls, ceilings, etc.?*



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If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, then you may have found the reason for your increased water usage! If you would like assistance in investigating further, consider scheduling a water use evaluation, which is offered free of charge to OMWD customers.

At your evaluation, a certified landscape architect and evaluator will provide you with a custom list of ways to improve water use efficiency, develop an irrigation schedule specifically for your landscape, demonstrate where to find shutoff valves to your home and landscape, show how to use the "leak detector" on your meter, and determine the water pressure at your home when possible. For more information, visit www.olivenhain.com/evaluation.

What Is That Thing?

Is this an image of a nearby lake!?

Nope, it's our Wet Weather Storage Pond designed to store recycled water produced at our 4S Ranch Water Reclamation Facility. When seasonal rain increases, demand for recycled water decreases, and recycled water is stored here for future use.

OMWD pursues a sustainable and renewable approach to our water portfolio by meeting approximately 14 percent of demands with recycled water. In 2020, recycled water conserved 2,183 acre-feet of drinking water that would have been used for irrigation and other non-potable uses. An acre-foot is about 325,900 gallons, enough to serve the annual needs of two and a half typical four-person households in San Diego County. Check out our video for more information on OMWD's recycled water at www.olivenhain.com/recycle.



OMWD was recently featured in the latest edition of American Water Works Association's Opflow Magazine, highlighting our #whatisthatthing campaign. The campaign explains important water infrastructure objects in and around the community that you see on your drive to work or on a walk around town. To view more entries, search #whatisthatthing on Facebook or Twitter!

"AAA" Bond Rating *Continued from page 1*

Our ratepayers will also enjoy shorter-term benefits resulting from the board's approval in June of a reduced budget for Fiscal Years 2021 and 2022. Originally approved in 2020, this was the first biennial budget adopted by the board, which offers greater predictability than previous single-year budgets. After a mid-term review, OMWD was able to reduce impacts to ratepayers through FY 2022 despite rapidly rising costs for materials and liability insurance, as well as ongoing increases in the cost of water from OMWD's water wholesaler, San Diego County Water Authority.

Especially considering the economic impact of COVID, our commitment to fiscal discipline is as important as ever. Yet, it's equally important to ensure we've allocated the funding necessary to move forward with critical projects and maintenance to continue providing reliable water service to our customers. This budget appropriately strikes that balance.



No FOG, No Clog

Fats, oils, and grease (or FOG) poured down a drain can clog municipal sewer pipes, creating blockages that lead to backups and spills. This practice could also damage the internal plumbing at your house or on your property.

To prevent damage to your pipes, flooding in your home, and problems at your local wastewater plant, use a can or other container to collect fats, oils, and grease instead of pouring them down the sink or toilets.

GO GREEN!

eBills make it easy to receive your monthly water bill in your email inbox on the same day paper bills are mailed. If you still want a paper copy, you can print it from your computer or save it to a file. Newsletters that accompany paper bills are also available online. Sign up today at www.olivenhain.com/ebill.

WARNING:

You are **125 times more likely to have a problem with a paper check than an electronic payment.**

*Source: U.S. Department of Treasury

